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## Female Power Portrayals in Ads, Underlying Dimensions


Melika Kordrostami

*California State University - San Bernardino*

Russell N. Laczniak

*Iowa State University, [laczniak@iastate.edu](mailto:laczniak@iastate.edu)*

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# Female Power Portrayals in Ads, Underlying Dimensions

## Abstract

Stereotypical female portrayals are still common in advertisements, though the role of women in society has progressed. In recent years, it appears there has been a move toward portraying women in power positions in ads. This research focuses on this new trend of female portrayals in ads. Power is defined as the capability to change others'/self behavior or thoughts. Building on theories of social power and feminine power, a new typology for different types of female power in ads is proposed. This typology includes five types of female power in ads including sexual power, athletic power, expert power, family power, and empowerment. To determine the viability of this classification system, participants are asked to complete a sorting task. A set of current pre-rated print ads are given to participants for them to sort into ads that demonstrate a similar type of female power in the same category. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) and hierarchical clustering of the results from sorting is used to extract the underlying dimensions of female power in ads and provide empirical evidence for the proposed typology. Future research might study interrelations between female power dimensions in ads and also study the consequences of exposure to female power portrayals.

## Disciplines

Business Law, Public Responsibility, and Ethics | Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies | Marketing | Women's Studies

## Comments

This abstract is published as Kordrostami, M., Lacznia, R.N. Female Power portrayals in Ads, Underlying Dimensions. *American Academy of Advertising. Conference. Proceedings (Online)*, 2018; 15. Posted with permission.

# **FEMALE POWER PORTRAYALS IN ADS, UNDERLYING DIMENSIONS**

*Melika Kordrostami, California State University San Bernardino, San Bernardino, CA*  
*Russell N. Laczniak, Iowa State University, Ames, IA*

## **Abstract**

Stereotypical female portrayals are still common in advertisements, though the role of women in society has progressed. In recent years, it appears there has been a move toward portraying women in power positions in ads. This research focuses on this new trend of female portrayals in ads. Power is defined as the capability to change others'/self behavior or thoughts. Building on theories of social power and feminine power, a new typology for different types of female power in ads is proposed. This typology includes five types of female power in ads including sexual power, athletic power, expert power, family power, and empowerment. To determine the viability of this classification system, participants are asked to complete a sorting task. A set of current pre-rated print ads are given to participants for them to sort into ads that demonstrate a similar type of female power in the same category. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) and hierarchical clustering of the results from sorting is used to extract the underlying dimensions of female power in ads and provide empirical evidence for the proposed typology. Future research might study interrelations between female power dimensions in ads and also study the consequences of exposure to female power portrayals.